

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PANAMA 07013 102138Z

64

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SUBJ: PANAMANIAN CALL FOR REPLACEMENT OF OAS

REF: PANAMA 6802

SUMMARY. A TWO-PART ARTICLE APPEARED ON THE EDITORIAL PAGES OF LA ESTELLA DECEMBER 4 AND 5 UNDER THE PEN NAME OCCASIONALLY USED BY FOREIGN MINISTER JUAN ANTONIO TACK. THE ARTICLE WAS A VITRIOLIC ATTACK ON THE OAS AND OUTLINED A LONG LITANY OF U.S. INTERVENTION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE FAILURE OF THE OAS TO SERVE THE INTERESTS OF ITS LATIN MEMBERS. ALLEGEDLY THE OAS' ULTIMATE FAILURE AND "ITS FINAL ATTACK OF APOPLEXY" OCCURRED AT QUITO IN NOVEMBER 1974. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDED BY CALLING FOR A NEW LATIN AMERICAN ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO SERVING LATIN AMERICAN INTERESTS. THE ARTICLES WERE FOLLOWED BY HEADLINES DECEMBER 7 INDICATING PANAMA'S DELEGATION AT THE AYACUCHO CEREMONIES WOULD GIVE IMPULSE TO A NEW REGIONAL ORGANIZATION. WHILE THE GOP'S DISCONTENT WITH THE OAS HAS BEEN EVIDENT FOR SOME TIME, IT HAS UNTIL NOW REFRAINED FROM ACTIVELY SEEKING TO CREATE A NEW ORGANIZATION. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIOR TO THE QUITO FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE CONCERNING THE SANCTIONS ON CUBA, LA ESTRELLA IN A FRONT PAGE NOTE INFORMED ITS READERS THAT SPECIAL COLUMNIST PEDRO ZAMBRANO WILSON WOULD

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PANAMA 07013 102138Z

ACCOMPANY THE PANAMANIAN DELEGATION TO QUITO AND REPORT ON THE

MEETING. PEDRO ZAMBRANO WILSON IS THE PEN NAME FOREIGN MINISTER TACK REPORTEDLY USES TO WRITE ON DELICATE SUBJECTS, USUALLY THOSE INVOLVING U.S.-PANAMANIAN RELATIONS. THE PROMISED ARTICLES FINALLY APPEARED DECEMBER 4 AND 5 AS A TWO-PART ESSAY ON LA ESTRELLA'S EDITORIAL PAGE UNDER THE TITLE "THE FINAL CRISIS OF THE OAS."

2. THE TWO-PART ARTICLE FOCUSED ON THE HISTORY OF U.S. IMPERIALISM AND INTERVENTION IN LATIN AMERICAN AFFAIRS AND CULMINATED WITH A DESCRIPTION OF "THE FINAL CRISIS OF THE OAS" AT THE QUITO MEETING. ZAMBRANO WILSON'S FIRST COLUMN RECALLED THE INEVITABLE DECLINE OF ALL EMPIRES SUCH AS PAX ROMANA AND PAX BRITANICA AND ALLEGED THAT A PAX AMERICANAN HAD NEVER EXISTED BECAUSE "VIOLENCE HAS CHARACTERIZED U.S. IMPERIAL EXPANSION" WHICH WAS ACCOMPANIED BY 90 U.S. INTERVENTIONS IN LATIN AMERICA DURING 172 YEARS OF U.S. IMPERIAL DOMINANCE, NOT INCLUDING ITS CONTINUED INTERVENTION IN PANAMA.

3. AS FOR THE OAS, IT WAS THE OLDEST ORGANIZATION OF ITS KIND, BUT IN QUITO THIS "OLD AND DECREPIT ORGANIZATION HAD SUFFERED ITS THUNDEROUS FINAL ATTACK OF APOPLEXY." ITS EPITAPH WAS: "IT SHOULD HAVE SERVED ALL. IT WAS DEDICATED TO ONLY ONE." THE OAS HAD BEEN AN EXAMPLE OF U.S. POLICY IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND SERVED AS AN INSTRUMENT OF U.S. "MANIFEST DESTINY."

4. ZAMBRANO WILSON CALLED FOR REAFFIRMATION OF THE IDEA OF BOLIVAR AND MARTI AND OF "PAN AMERICANISM BASED ON A UNION OF PEOPLES OF COMMON ORIGINS AND INTERESTS AND OF SIMILAR DESTINIES." IT ALLEGED THAT THE U.S. IS INTERESTED IN LATIN AMERICA'S DESTINY ONLY AS A "SOURCE OF CHEAP PRIMARY MATERIALS AND AS A MARKET FOR MANUFACTURED GOODS." U.S. INTERESTS, IT ALLEGED, ARE PRIMARILY MILITARY AND AGGRESSIVE AND THEREFORE NOT IN ACCORD WITH THE PEACEFUL INTERESTS OF THE AMERICAN STATES. REFERRING TO THE PANAMA CANAL, ZAMBRANO WILSON ALLEGED THE "OAS HAS NOT CONTRIBUTED A THING TOWARD DEFENDING OUR SOVEREIGNTY, OUR TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND LESS STILL OUR INDEPENDENCE." THE CANAL ZONE WAS DESCRIBED AS "THE PEN WOUND IN PANAMA." THE OAS WAS CRITICIZED FOR NOT ACTING FOLLOWING THE EVENTS OF 1964 DESPITE 22 PANAMANIAN DEATHS AND 500 WOUNDED, THEREFORE "THE OAS AND ALL THAT IT STANDS FOR IS AN UNPLEASANT SUBJECT IN PANAMA."

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 PANAMA 07013 102138Z

5. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDED WITH A PLEA FOR LATIN AMERICANS ON THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF BOLIVAR'S CALL FOR LATIN AMERICAN UNITY TO "RERAISE THE BANNER OF THE LATIN AMERICAN CONTINENTAL FATHERLAND " AND A SUGGESTION THAT A NEW REGIONAL ORGANIZATION OF LATIN AMERICAN STATES BE FORMED.

6. ZAMBRANO WILSON'S ARTICLE APPARENTLY FORESHADOWED DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS BY PANAMANIAN OFFICIALS DURING THE MEETINGS OF CHIEFS OF

STATE IN LIMA, DECEMBER 7-9. LA ESTRELLA'S FEATURE HEADLINE
DECEMBER 7 SAID PANAMA WOULD PUSH FOR A NEW ORGANIZATION OF
LATIN AMERICAN STATES DURING THE AYACUCHO COMMEMORATIVE CERE-
MONIES.

7. COMMENT. THE GOP FOR SOME TIME HAS MADE NO SECRET OF ITS
DISLIKE FOR THE OAS AND ITS DESIRE THAT A NEW ORGANIZATION OF
LATIN AMERICAN STATES BE FORMED WITHOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF THE
U.S. ITS REASONS ARE FOUNDED ON A DEEP-FELT CONVICTION THAT THE
OAS HAS BEEN INEFFECTIVE IN SERVING LATIN AMERICA'S, AND MORE
SPECIFICALLY, PANAMA'S INTERESTS VIS-A-VIS THE U.S. WHETHER THE
ZAMBRANO WILSON ARTICLES AND PANAMA'S ANNOUNCED INTENTION TO
BEGIN LOBBYING FOR THE FORMATION OF A NEW ORGANIZATION ARE TRIAL
BALLOONS TO TEST THE CLIMATE FOR SUCH AN INITIATIVE OR ARE THE
BEGINNING OF A SERIOUS EFFORT BY PANAMA TO REPLACE THE OAS WITH
A PURELY LATIN ORGANIZATION REMAINS TO BE SEEN.
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